

CONSERVATION

Open-space preservation pact awaits OK

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DUXBURY

DUXBURY — An agreement that a homeowner has reached with a local land preservation group would prevent further development of 3 acres of oceanfront land.

Mary Winslow is seeking a conservation restriction on the South Duxbury parcel, which is between Marshall Street and Eagles Nest Bay. Winslow has a summer home, a small log cabin, on the property.

The Wildlands Trust of Southeastern Massachusetts would administer the restriction. The agreement reached by Winslow and the trust calls for prohibiting the cutting of trees

in a 50-foot-wide strip on the ocean side of the property. It also states that the house can be repaired or rebuilt but cannot exceed the current 2,000-square-foot area or the height of 23 feet.

If the agreement is approved by the selectmen and the state's secretary of environmental affairs, it will be recognized by the Internal Revenue Service and provide tax relief to Winslow and future owners.

"There has to be a public benefit shown," Pat Loring, a member of the Wildlands Trust board, told selectmen at their meeting last

night. "In this case, it's going to be scenic views and wildlife habitat."

Loring said the land would provide a habitat for migratory songbirds and woodland mammals.

Selectmen appeared amenable to the agreement but said they wanted to wait until their next meeting to vote. They want to find out how much the town would lose in taxes because of the assessment change, and they want town counsel to look at the document.

The restrictions called for in the agreement would be permanent and would change the assessed value of the parcel. Winslow would save on property taxes and federal estate taxes as a result.

The agreement would be the ninth conservation restriction in Duxbury. Loring said other towns have dozens, and Martecchini proposed that more be done to advertise the opportunity to residents.

In other business, the selectmen voted to approve shellfish aquacultural grant applications for two residents, Christian Horne and John McCluskey.

The board also approved the recommendation of Harbormaster Donald Beers to extend the bonus season for commercial harvesting of quahog clams and softshell clams through the month of September.

The selectmen will meet next on September 7, the day after Labor Day.